

Volunteer Activity

Federal Election Commission
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Some information presented in this publication has been modified by the Bipartisan Campaign Reform Act of 2002 (BCRA). An updated version of this publication will be available at a later date. In the interim, please visit the FEC's BCRA page for additional information.

Introduction

This brochure applies only to volunteer activity related to Federal elections. It explains how individuals may volunteer their services and certain goods to candidates for Federal office and to party political committees. Such activity does not count as a contribution or expenditure to influence Federal elections and is not reportable. However, certain activities are subject to a monetary limit; the volunteer's expenses that exceed the limit must be reported by a candidate or party committee as an in-kind contribution. For example, an individual might decide to offer his/her home to a candidate for a fundraising event. As host, the individual may spend up to \$1,000 for invitations, food and beverage without making a contribution. If the individual exceeds the limit by spending \$1,500, the \$500 would be a reportable in-kind contribution and would count against the individual's contribution limit.

Citations below refer to the Federal Election Commission regulations, contained in title 11 of the Code of Federal Regulations (11 CFR). If you have any questions after reading this brochure, please call the Commission in Washington, D.C., toll free, 800/424-9530.¹

Volunteer Activity Subject to Limits

Food, Beverage and Invitations

An individual may buy food, beverage and invitations used in connection with candidate- or party-related activity conducted in his/her home or in a church or community room (see below). The individual may spend up to \$1,000 per candidate, per election, for these items, and up to \$2,000 annually on behalf of all political committees of the same party. 11 CFR 100.7(b)(6).

¹ The reader should not rely solely on this brochure but should also consult the Federal Election Campaign Act and Commission regulations.

Travel

An individual may pay for his/her own travel expenses related to candidate or party activity. The individual may spend up to \$1,000 per candidate, per election, and up to \$2,000 annually on behalf of all political committees of the same party.

11 CFR 100.7(b)(8).

Vendor Discounts

A vendor, whether or not incorporated, may sell food and beverage, at cost, to a candidate's campaign or to a party political committee. The cumulative value of such discounts (i.e., the difference between the normal charge and the amount paid by the committee) must not exceed \$1,000 per candidate, per election, or \$2,000 annually on behalf of all political committees of the same party. 11 CFR 100.7(b)(7) and

114.1(a)(2)(v).

Volunteer Activity with No Limits

Personal Services

An individual may volunteer any personal service provided he or she is not compensated for the service by any other committee, individual or organization.

11 CFR 100.7(b)(3).

Activities in the Home

An individual may offer the use of his/her home or the recreation room of his/her residential complex for candidate- and party-related activities, provided the room is available without regard to political affiliation. Any nominal fee charged for the room is not considered a contribution. 11 CFR 100.7(b)(4).

Activities in Church or Community Room

An individual volunteer may obtain the use of a church or community room for candidate- and party-related activities, provided the room is used on a regular basis by members of the community, without regard to political affiliation, for noncommercial purposes. Any nominal fee paid for the room is not considered a contribution.

11 CFR 100.7(b)(5).

Living Expenses

An individual may spend any amount for his/her normal living expenses incurred while engaging in volunteer activity. 11 CFR 100.7(b)(8).